UNITY

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION

Ethical Viewpoints - - *George E. O'Dell*

Civilization Versus Barbarism - *F. S. Marvin*

Humanism and Religion - - - - - - - *F. H. Amphlett Micklewright*

THE STUDY TABLE
By Karl M. C. Chworowsky

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The Field

Threats to Civil Liberties

"The intrusion of military authority into the civilian life of the nation is the most serious danger to our civil liberties at present," declares Dr. Robert E. Cushman, Professor of Government at Cornell University.

The civil liberties that are threatened today are not the same ones that were endangered during the first World War, according to Doctor Cushman in a new edition of the Public Affairs Pamphlet, *Safeguarding Our Civil Liberties,* recently published by the Public Affairs Committee.

The special military areas established by the Army and the enforced evacuation of thousands of American citizens from these sections to federal relocation centers cause the author to believe that we appear, during the present war, to have abandoned the rule that martial law cannot validly be in force side by side with civilian law. "We should watch with jealous suspicion and concern," he says, "this tendency to supplant civil authority by martial law. Serious danger lies in this development."

In the field of free speech Doctor Cushman finds no serious problems at present, although nearly 5,000 persons were prosecuted for unlawful speeches, publications, or meetings during the last war.

And the brutal treatment of aliens by federal officials, which was a national scandal during the last war, has not been repeated. "On the contrary," declares Doctor Cushman, "extraordinary pains are being taken by the government to extend to aliens and enemy aliens fair and reasonable treatment."

The pamphlet utters another warning, which comes, unfortunately, too late for the citizens of Detroit, Los Angeles, and Beaumont. Doctor Cushman cautions against "an intolerant public opinion which clamors for the suppression of minority rights." We have succumbed again to what he calls a "diseased" public opinion which whips whole communities into emotional frenzies and causes them to lose their capacity for thoughtful judgment.

Yet the domestic picture has another bright spot. According to the pamphlet, the recent actions of the Supreme Court in reversing itself in two cases involving the Jehovah's Witnesses and in refusing to cancel the naturalization of the Communist, William Schneiderman, are steps that enlarge and strengthen the safeguards which protect our liberties.

Safeguarding Our Civil Liberties is Pamphlet No. 43 in the series of popular, factual, ten-cent pamphlets issued by the Public Affairs Committee, Inc., non-profit, educational organization at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York. Doctor Cushman is also author of another Public Affairs Pamphlet, *What's Happening to Our Constitution?*

—*Public Affairs Committee Release.*

UNITY

"He Hath Made of One All Nations of Men"

Volume CXXIX SEPTEMBER, 1943 No. 7

Editorial Comments

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES

I

In the July issue of this paper, Mr. Victor S. Yarros, staunch and honored liberal, challenged the Philadelphia Quakers for their action in declaring for an "immediate peace-by-consultation" program, and the Editor for endorsing this program. He wants to know if the Quakers "really believe that the United Nations could 'consult' Hitler, Tojo, and Mussolini, negotiate with them . . . , and reach a morally satisfactory agreement." He asks if they believe that such consultation could lead to any satisfactory peace terms, and, if so, what these terms may be. The answer to these questions is easy, if not altogether reassuring. Quakers and other pacifists, including this editor, have no very great confidence that negotiations between the United Nations and the Axis would lead to any satisfactory peace. One of the reasons why these pacifists repudiate war is that it abolishes reason in favor of force and violence, and thus defeats its own end of settling disputes rationally and enduringly. This war is producing on both sides of the battle front, among the Allies as well as among their enemies, a state of mind, if it can be called such, which is calculated to nullify every serious attempt to act intelligently and sympathetically in the interests of peace. War, by its own nature, creates madness and destroys sanity, and thus makes it difficult alike to precipitate and to consummate discussion. So the pacifists are not fooling themselves—they know what they are up against! But if they have no great confidence in the success of this negotiation method, they have no confidence at all in the success of the war method. If there is any certainty anywhere, it lies in the fact that the continuance of this war to the bitter end and the settlement of its issues by the arbitrament of the sword can only lead to final and perfect disaster. To speak of settlement in terms of war is itself ridiculous, for, as a great statesman wisely declared, "War settles nothing and unsettles everything." To fight this war through can only bring the collapse of civilization and a new dark ages, or else the sure laying of the groundwork for another war. The pacifists believe that there is not the slightest chance of peace coming out of this war or any other war, whereas there may be some slight chance of peace coming out of negotiation. In this the pacifists may be mistaken, but it is the explanation of their attitude and the answer to Mr. Yarros' question. As for the terms of peace that the pacifists would offer in negotiation, these are of course the ones basic to universal peace and cooperation among the nations of the earth. Since these terms would include enemy nations, and be as advantageous to them as to ourselves, and involve equal sacrifice on our side as on theirs, I see no reason for believing they would not be accepted.

II

The great victory in Italy is due first of all to Allied military prowess. This war is being carried on, in striking contrast to the last war, with a high degree of efficiency and imagination. General Eisenhower, with Patton, Alexander, Montgomery, and others, is leading a great team with extraordinary success. But behind and above these soldiers, let it not be forgotten, are Roosevelt and Churchill who, as President and Premier, are commanders-in-chief of all operations at the front. To these two men belongs the responsibility, and to them likewise should go the credit, as in the case of failure would certainly go the blame. I recall the story of Marshal Joffre, who was asked by a curious and tactless lady at a dinner one night, "Tell me, General, who really won the battle of the Marne?" To which the great Frenchman replied, "Madam, I do not know. I only know who would have lost it if it had been lost." But when all has been said in praise of the military campaign, so superbly conceived and led, there remains the tremendous fact that Italy was overthrown not so much from without as from within. Mussolini was the agent of his own undoing. This petty and puerile demagogue never had the allegiance and devotion of the Italian people, who are essentially lovers of liberty. They were never intrigued by the empty and froth-blown talk about Caesar, and the restoration of the Roman Empire. Had Victor Emanuel and his advisors

had one spark of courage when Mussolini marched on Rome, they would have scattered the insectiferous Fascists like so many mosquitos. One swift blow at the end, and a quiet order from the King—and all was over. The Fascist regime collapsed, as it would have collapsed at any time, like a mere house of cards. Which leads us to another and deeper truth in this silly farce—namely, the futility of force! Force, we say, is our ultimate reliance. Yet force never accomplishes anything that is sure and permanent. Mussolini based his whole movement on force—and by that fact alone, it was doomed from the beginning. Hitler followed the same course, used the same force of arms to accomplish his ends—and already his feet are set in the pathway of death. We ended the last war by force, and by force imposed a rule of so-called peace, and therewith made inevitable a second war. Now we are in danger of following the same road again—preparing for victory and the rule of force in Europe! It can't be done! To victor and vanquished, to democrat and totalitarian, alike, force is fatal. Only as the last vestige of force is eliminated, will the peace after this war endure.

III

Everybody but the newspaper cartoonists rejoiced at the fall of Mussolini. It was so fitting that this unmitigated fraud, this man so accurately described by the *New York Herald-Tribune* as "half clown and half savage," should go in just this way! But it disgusted me to see the undignified way in which a really momentous event was received publicly, and especially to note some of the people who joined in the celebration. For Mussolini in his day was quite a favorite here in America. There were plenty to praise him, and to toady to him, and to seek the honor of waiting upon him in his fabulous reception room. For the Duce had restored order to Italy, he had put the working-class in its place, he had suppressed the Communists, he had made the trains run on time, and chased the beggars from the steps of the churches! An American ambassador led in the adulation of this petty tyrant — a great American industrialist visited him with offers of financial aid—a famous sculptor made a pilgrimage to do his bust. By what right do these people now hail the fall of one whom they thought and said might well have a counterpart in this country? UNITY, which has never published a good word about this loathsome sham of a man, but has consistently denounced his arrogance, cruelty, and wanton hypocrisy, UNITY and others like-minded have a right to rejoice in his fall. But not those who, to their own disgrace, have "followed in his train." And the same thing applies to Ezra Pound, now under indictment as a traitor. Think of the honors that have been showered on this man who, from the beginning of his career, was as much a fraud as the Duce to whom he sold himself at the end. Colleges have given degrees to Ezra Pound, critics have acclaimed his so-called verse, high-class magazines have published this verse, anthologists have collected and embalmed it for posterity. For years the literary world has seemed to agree that this alleged poet and critic was one of the great creative authors of our age. But nothing could be farther from the truth. As I have said more than once in these columns, Ezra Pound was a sham of the first order. Deliberately, i.e. by design and calculation, he played traitor to every sacred literary standard and every noble literary tradition that our race possessed. He betrayed the culture of our world, as now he has betrayed the integrity of this nation—and plenty there were to ape him, follow him, and praise him. Now that he has fallen in ignominy, our literary world should don sackcloth and ashes in token of its own shame. There is such a thing, after all, as seeing good and bad, virtue and vice, *from the beginning.*

IV

It seems to be generally agreed that the war is not going very well on the home front, while going very well indeed on the fighting front. This may mean many things—and I think it does! Among these many things is the fact that, however badly the home front is going these days, it is at least going well enough to sustain the fighting front. Also, it may be well to remember that we ourselves, the people generally, are a good part of this home front, as well as the bureaucrats whom we criticize in Washington. How much of this confusion at home is due not to management, or mismanagement, but to recalcitrant human material? When I see employers plotting and planning for greater profits out of this war, and employees striking for higher wages to meet higher costs occasioned by higher wages, automobilists pleasure-driving in spite of bans against this indulgence, black markets flourishing with buyers as well as sellers, I wonder what's the matter with Americans, and understand why we are in a good deal of a mess. It's easy to criticize the government, but perhaps the government is doing a good job in meeting conditions created by a public that is in the war for what it can get out of it. The prime heresy of these times, apart from sheer selfishness and greed, is a fixed feeling that this is a rich country, and there is no reason in the world why things should not go much as they have always gone—that if the government were only run properly, we should enjoy the same high standard of living we have always enjoyed. Perhaps even a higher standard, since everybody is working and money is plentiful! But this ignores certain important facts. First, we are financing this war—we are paying the bills in this war not only for ourselves, but in large part for our Allies. We are feeding not only our own population, but a considerable portion of the world besides—and will have to feed more as our area of conquest grows. We are wasting wealth and goods galore,

for the essence of war is waste. The fighting forces must have far more of everything than they need, to obviate the deadly peril of not having enough—and what isn't used is spoiled or thrown away. Lastly, war —this war, like every other war—is the business of destroying things. It is death at work, not life. It can best be described as the process of opening up the veins of an organism, and letting it bleed to death. The moment we went to war, we opened up the arteries of the nation's life, and the blood-letting began. Not merely blood itself in the literal sense, but everything that makes up the energy, comfort, and very existence of a people! We *can't* have normalcy while we are fighting. The level of life is bound to go down, and down, and down. When a nation recognizes this fact, it really knows that it is at war.

V

In the July issue of UNITY, I expressed my enthusiastic admiration for Wendell Willkie and his book, *One World*. If only to hold the balances even, and to be fair to my own mind, I would here in the same spirit express my enthusiastic admiration for Henry A. Wallace and his recently published volume, *The Century of the Common Man*. Of all American statesmen today, these two men, Republican and Democrat, seem to me today to embody the basic and ineradicable idealism of this country. Mr. Wallace represents an extraordinary combination of mysticism and practicality. Some of his books rank high in the contemporary religious literature of this era. At the same time he has proved himself one of the ablest and most devoted administrators in Washington. All his life he has dreamed dreams and seen visions of a democracy which should fulfil the aspirations of America and extend itself to all the peoples of the earth. In recent times, thanks to his high office in the administration, he has labored diligently to find ways and means of making his dreams and visions come true, and has launched some schemes more experimental than successful. But in spite of his mysticism, he is no fanatic, has recognized mistakes when they have revealed themselves as such, and has steadily made progress in the practical realization of his ideas. He has steadily also himself grown in stature with the years, and today is a statesman of a high order. Mr. Wallace, like Mr. Willkie, thinks of the American people as a part of the great body of humanity, and sees our destiny fulfilled only in terms of an identical fulfillment of the destiny of all men everywhere. The quart of milk a day which he would guarantee to every person in this country, he would guarantee as well to the humblest Hottentot. It is significant that Mr. Wallance and Mr. Willkie are both under the savage attack of reactionary American interests. How certain high and mighty groups in this nation do hate the ideals for which the nation stands! This attack is serious, for it forecasts just what we shall be up against at the close of the war when any attempt is made to write a peace which shall envisage a future of mankind in which the interests of one shall be the interests of all from the highest to the lowest, and including the weakest as well as the strongest. The tide of opposition, a new isolationism, will rise like a flood, and may sweep away every idealistic purpose of that fateful hour. In such an hour, men like Wallace and Willkie, Democrat and Republican, must join hands and appeal together to the American people who will not fail them.

VI

It grieves the heart to hear of the passing of Josiah Wedgwood—and at the same time warms the heart to think of him. The life he lived, the causes he served, the man he was! His name, of course, carries us back generations to the Wedgwoods, who created the world-famous pottery, and to Charles Darwin who married a Wedgwood. Josiah's great-great-grandfather, of the same name, was a friend of Benjamin Franklin, and rejoiced at the end of the Revolutionary War that America was free. Next only to Lloyd George, Josiah Wedgwood was the oldest member of Parliament in length of service. In later years made a Lord, he was sitting at his death in the House of Lords, a liberalizing influence in a pool of conservative reaction. He described himself once, in a letter to the *New York Times*, as "a dyed-in-the-wool old radical, steeped in the tradition of John Bright and Henry George." This revealed the temper of the man—first a Liberal of the great nineteenth century school, and then keeping pace with the new century by becoming a Laborite. He was an incorrigible individualist—and a Socialist, largely because he saw in Socialism the only means in this modern age of preserving individualism. He was all his life a valiant champion of minority causes, as witness the Single Tax. He was a foe of empire, because empire meant to him the enslavement and exploitation of helpless peoples. He developed early and maintained to the end a special interest in the Jews, and espoused with the ardor of a bridegroom the movement for the dedication of Palestine as a homeland of Israel. His heart burned for Zionism. In his book, *The Seventh Dominion*, he thought he had found a way of reconciling the contending claims of English, Jews, and Arabs. As in the case of India, dominion status proved to be no substitute for liberty. But, failing this, Wedgwood was for liberty as a release of the Jews from woe. In a man like Josiah Wedgwood, we see England at her best. We talk of England as though the country were one vast serried array of Tory imperialists. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The Tories, alas, are the dominating political power. But behind them is the greatest labor movement in our western world, and thousands of free men, radicals and liberals, who preserve, cherish, and nobly serve the clear, clean cause of liberty. Josiah Wedgwood was one of these—the salt of the earth!

Jottings

When Jeremiah looked upon the wars of his time, he used a phrase which applies as well to the wars of our time. Said Jeremiah, *"The Lord hath a controversy with the nations."* As a philosophy of history in days like these, this prophetic statement is incomparable.

It may be well to remember, lest we be too proud in this war for freedom, that Gandhi and Nehru have now been in prison in India for an entire year. The time must often drag interminably for these two great men, and they must wonder on occasion where is this liberty we talk so much about.

The Annual Report of the American Civil Liberties Union is a remarkable document. It offers "strong evidence to support the thesis that our democracy can fight even the greatest of all wars and still maintain the essentials of liberty." This is to the credit alike of the American people and of the Roosevelt administration.

The shortage of glass, we are told, is getting serious —so serious that a drive is on to collect all glass bottles now lying round our houses. But why not stop using glass for liquor bottles. End the liquor traffic, and there would be no lack of glass for any legitimate need.

The rise of the steamship, *Normandie,* crack French liner, out of the mud of the North River, where she has been immersed for eighteen months—may this not be taken as a symbol of the resurrection of France from the slough of the Nazi occupation? It is in any case one of the greatest salvaging jobs on record.

Prejudice against Roman Catholics is fast coming to take its place in this country alongside prejudice against Jews and prejudice against Negroes. In one respect, at least, it is the most dangerous prejudice of the three, since liberals join in it.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

Ethical Viewpoints

GEORGE E. O'DELL

Anyone who came to this country to work in the sphere of ethical or rationalistic religion after having worked similarly in England could not but be observant of a shift in emphasis. In England the stress had been mainly on ideas; in America it would seem to be more on persons. The latter emphasis is natural enough in a country dedicated consciously to democracy; increasingly we shout from the housetops that we believe in people—in *all* people. We shout it so stridently indeed as to create an impression in cynical minds that it is an unconsciously willed device for keeping up our courage. For it is an enormous venture of faith, with no myth behind it like the myths of the conventional religions. It appeals to our need of romance. Romantic also can be the belief in ideas, in ethical principles, in the Moral Law. There can be a reverence for these just as great as that expended on the belief in "all" people. But obviously these faiths are not incompatibles; it is possible to hold both. As finding separate protagonists, they are merely opportunities for emphasis.

It is when we come to ideas themselves that real trouble begins. We talk of Absolutism and Relativism in the sphere of morals, or even of truth, and get heated about them, but fail to see that here also incompatibility may be largely a matter of emphasis, and of prejudice based on defective habits of thought. Most of us, in terms of psychology, are "visualists" in our thinking. We draw mental pictures. To the Relativist, the Absolutist, like the family-bible God, is an unpleasantly dictatorial person, who professes to know everything in morals, and to lay down the law for everyone without regard to difference in circumstances. To the Absolutist, the Relativist may seem to be a person who has unshipped his rudder or who goes sailing with hardly even a sense of direction, making up his charts as he goes along.

We are bemused and bedevilled by words which have heavy fringes of association. Let us coin, for the purpose of this discussion, two fringeless words, and talk about Certaintists and Situationists. Now we can submit that every serious Certaintist is a Situationist, and vice versa. Really there seems no escape from it except into woodenheaded doctrinairism or ethical anarchy. In every situation which offers a choice of actions that arouses us morally, we prefer one to the rest, and we are convinced that our choice involves our *knowing* that one must be the better—even though we may be proved wrong in our judgment because of inadequate information, or misinformation, or defective insight on our part. We *know* at least that some course is the right course, even if we cannot hit on just what it is. That is to say, we are Certaintists.

But there is more than this. Our choice does not arise merely out of the given situation, even though it may be specially relative to that situation. We carry over into each new situation insights which we have gained in previous ones. We may find we have to modify them; but this is simply to increase our insight into such situations. We could not take one of the children credited with having been suckled by jungle beasts and plant him in an utterly strange situation and expect him to manifest ethical perception commensurate with the situation's needs. Ethical perception grows and its certainties increase with experience.

On the other hand, the convinced Certaintist, who declares: Thou shalt not steal, murder, bear false witness, commit adultery, and the like, must surely recognize that such commands (whatever his ultimate theory) are born out of human experience, and have to be con-

tinually interpreted. What *is* stealing, murder, what not? Edmund Burke, with his eighteenth century outlook, saw in taxation for any but the barest police purposes a sort of government stealing; and even the purpose of some rich man to spend his legally acquired money as he pleased, irrespective of what harm it might do, as involving a sacred property right that must be challenged only with hesitation. Today many think differently. Yet who says there are no such things as stealing, or murder? But the intelligent Certaintist knows that his certainties, however fundamental and even august, are to be applied in newly arising situations with such interpretation as renders them the better able to serve human welfare and the cause of human justice. Even men whose Absolutism has been almost a byword have not necessarily supposed otherwise. Felix Adler said:

> The absolute religion is a lifeless abstraction. . . . A religion can possess vital force only when it adapts itself to a certain environment, when it corresponds to the moral and mental needs of the race of mankind in a certain period of their history. And when the moral and mental needs have radically changed, then the old religion becomes obsolete and an entirely new religion must take its place.

And again:

> To be orthodox is a mistake in anything—to be orthodox in a moral creed as much as in a religious creed. To be orthodox is to be stiff, inflexible, pedantic, repellent, inhospitable, supercilious. I am not orthodox, even in regard to marriage. I simply say that this is the road which the best human experience has marked out.

And these words from Stanton Coit, the Platonist and Emersonian:

> The enemy of moral progress is moral deadness, moral blindness. And such deadness and blindness are almost entirely induced by the practice of imposing morality authoritatively and dogmatically. . . . The mere puppet of the morality of the past does neither right nor wrong; he has sunk to the level of the beasts of the field, of the plants that grow therein, and of stocks and stones. He is at best a spiritual corpse galvanized into a semblance of life by electric shocks applied to the mechanism of his soul.

The many whom Adler influenced, or those British men who got their inspiration from Coit, and are now in this country serving in the Ethical Culture movement, are Certaintists to the core, in the sense that they believe that there are moral facts in this universe which we learn and which our honor cannot deny. Yet they also recognize not that the certainties change but that their meaning has to be newly discerned relative to this or that circumstance in life. The real difference between Certaintists and Situationists, let me insist, is one of emphasis, and therefore each should have due respect for the other, acknowledging that the other's emphasis is not at bottom an incompatible thing.

But now we must come to a division of opinion where the emphasis involves what looks like a more serious difficulty. Here is a passage from Doctor Dewey:

> The values of natural human intercourse and mutual dependence are open and public, capable of verification by the methods by which all natural facts are established. . . . The goods actually experienced in the concrete relations of the family, neighborhood, citizenship, pursuit of art and science, are what men actually depend upon for guidance and support: . . . their otherworldly locus has obscured their real nature and has weakened their force.

I would quarrel here only with the word "otherworldly." Like most of the words which cloud discussion of things of the spirit, it is a space word. And also a word of reproach. It has been used for several generations in a spatial sense: it has referred disparagingly to the belief in a presumed actual other world to which we would go after death. Its use in the presentation of ideas confuses issues. Unfortunately our vocabulary is inadequate: we talk about a "world" of ideas, of an "overarching" ideal, or, in ethics, of "higher" and "lower," what not, and our visualizing minds are confused thereby. This is especially so in any discussion of the origin of our moral concepts. "Otherworldly" in this connection does not mean the same thing it means relative to heaven and hell; it means that conceivably this or that idea has a certain actuality whether anyone at the moment happens to be thinking it or not. Far be it from me to enter here into this most abstruse and tantalizing topic of controversy, except to seek some means of harmonization, that those of us who differ about it may yet work together in common causes. How can we escape from spatial terms? "Other world"? We can just as well say that ideas and ideals soak through our experience rather than impinge from an outside source; but there again our language is spatial.

The nub of the matter is that the one party in the conflict believes that our certainties, if I may now venture to take that word for granted—that our certainties are discovered; the other party that they are created. Here we have our most serious antinomy. Is man merely a discoverer of truth and right? Or does he invent them from situation to situation? But here once more we are plagued by the misuse of a word. "Create" is a word which began with a meaning that still obtains, but has acquired another meaning, which ought to have another word to convey it. "Create" means to make something out of nothing. Its secondary, and different meaning is transforming the elements of matter or thought into new forms, new relations. But in what sense are they new? Are they creations out of nothing or are they discoveries? Again I must find a term which has no fringe of emotional or antagonistic associations—an old term which has, alas, long gone out of fashion: *permanent possibilities*. It is as useful an expression as I know for conveying an intended meaning without meeting with a dozen prejudices. To see its meaning let me take an illustration from another field, that of music. Beethoven composes the magnificent Hymn to Joy in the Ninth Symphony. In what sense does he create it? In what does his work consist? Surely in the rearrangement of relationships among a number of sounds. If not he, then someone else might conceivably at some time have made that rearrangement—one among so many quadrillions of rearrangements possible that of course its composition by another might well be unlikely. But Beethoven did not make that air out of nothing. He did not create rearrangements that were impossible before him or would have been impossible after him. We are in the sphere (another awkward space word, but it must do) of permanent possibilities.

Now the professed Certaintist in ethics sees our moral decisions, our insights into right and wrong, from situation to situation, as permanent possibilities. The Situationist, on the other hand, very naturally cries out: "But this reduces Man to a mere discoverer: and there are limits to the possibilities of discovery. Creative man ceases to be creative; he is not making something that is all his own!" I will not prolong

the protests, they are obvious.

But there is surely an answer which the believer in permanent possibilities may make in some hope of providing thereby a bridge. The permanent possibilities are limitless, hence the discoveries must be limitless. Just as science has revealed limitless fields for investigation, and for every discovery made sees a hundred more to call on him of which he had not previously had even a glimpse; just also as the pictorial artist might speak in a like way, so the permanent possibilities in the field of human relations open up more and more as we advance, and are plainly limitless. The Certaintist, therefore, can appreciate the creative cravings of those who long for freedom along this line, and surely the Situationist can recognize, even if he does not wholly accept, the magnificent possibilities of experiment in better ways of living, as being discoveries which increasing experience makes possible. Can we not escape from spatial terms, and if anyone talk of moral ideals as being "laid up in heaven," recognize such a phrase for the poetry that it is? It but expresses faith in our judgments, the belief that contrary judgments—if ours are right—would not be true.

Two more points. First, let us look for a moment at an analogous discussion by the subtle thinkers of the Catholic Church. They provide us with certain alternatives, to no one of which is the church pontifically committed. (1) Right and Wrong are creations, out of nothing previous, by Almighty God. (2) God having created, again out of nothing, the naturalistic order is bound by necessary limitations within it. As one doctor puts it, within the natural order God can no more make wrong over into right than he can devise a triangle which, considered as a triangle, has more than three angles. (3) God may be bound by the natural order within itself, but outside it his power is limitless, and what we call wrong for our world might be right in another. Once I put this up to a young Catholic divinity student who has since become a full-fledged professor of philosophy: "Suppose God were to make another world in which lying, theft, murder and adultery were the order of the day, and he labelled them as right, would they *be* right?" He replied that they would. It is only fair to add that when I repeated this answer in a group of liberal ministers, one of whom had been a Catholic priest, the ex-Catholic was moved to indignation and declared that no reputable Catholic theologian ever said anything so foolish. So apparently (and indeed it is the case) there is a further Catholic alternative: right is right anywhere, any time, and wrong is wrong.

But, to confine our consideration to the natural order, when some Certaintists insist that our universe or at least our known world, is subject to certain ethical inevitabilities (I am trying still to avoid fringey language) the fact ought to be obvious. We cannot conceive of a human world subject to universal lying, theft, and murder. No human society could so hold together and survive. Although the Spartans may have taught their boys how to steal and not get caught, the intention certainly was not to encourage them in a habit of stealing from Spartans, whatever they might do to foreigners or helots. And when the ancient Vikings dreamed of a paradise in which they would fight all day until everyone was killed, they planned to get up again next morning and, with the true unabated ardor, go to it again. There are certain terms on which alone society is possible in the long run; we do not invent these, we discover them by trial and error and the exercise of ethical horsesense. When Adler speaks of a lack on his part of dogmatism in the matter of marriage, but that he sees that marriage *works,* he means that he believes, let us say, the late Ellen Key to have misunderstood the natural order when she urged in the name of democracy that the husband who finds his wife a bore and that some other woman seems more likely to inspire him, should change over; and so also with wives. Miss Key made it a matter of ethics: the man must try to achieve his best, that democracy may be bettered. But she makes no allowance for the likelihood that in a society so maritally restless and uncertain, hysteria and insanity would vastly increase, and perhaps in this event one sex would have to lock the other up. The Mohammedans have been used to locking up the women. Perhaps in the idyllic democratic community the women would end by locking up the men! There are inevitabilities in the matter of wrong conduct, even if we have to learn by dire experience what the inevitabilities are. And what is this but a process of discovery? Let creativeness thrive on discovery.

Finally, it may wisely be urged that conflicting philosophies are in no small measure a matter of personal temperament. There is excellent psychological evidence that the ethical ends posited by differing and even quarrelling philosophers—duty, happiness, personal perfection, social welfare, and all the rest—are at bottom so many expressions of personal temperament. All are in their place useful yardsticks, appropriate to be applied in one or another situation. In the search for unity we may find that, like William James with his pluralism in philosophy, we have to adopt a sort of pluralism in ethics. It may be that just as the crude notion of early physics regarding a hypothetical fixed elementary atom has had to give way to the recognition of immense complexity, so we shall have to acknowledge that the contributions of hedonism, perfectionism, and the rest have somehow to be harmonized in a concept which includes them all. So, too, the Certaintist and the Situationist, as I have here ventured to call them, have contributions to make that complement each other instead of cancelling each other out.

On the Day of Wrath

(Dies Irae)

Bomb! but with Truth and Charity;
The curse of Cain repeal!—
Butter and eggs and margerine
Marrow and milk and meal,
These are the seals with which to guarantee
The royal progress of Democracy;
These are the means of triumph and of weal
With which the Prince of Peace the world would heal.

These be the myrrh and frankincense:
Chocolate, oil, and sugar-cane,
Cotton and corn and wool,
To bring to the Lamb of Innocence—
The Conscience of the world,
And train a new Intelligence
When battle-flags are furled.

BRENT ALLINSON.

Civilization Versus Barbarism

F. S. MARVIN

Someone has said: "Another Thirty Years' War!" Humanity forbid! At the mad rate at which we consume the resources of the earth, all would be exhausted and mankind nearly extinguished long before then. But the analogy which suggested the remark is worth considering. Then as now, the Germans in the East were opposed by the West. Then as now, there was an appalling exhaustion of the Germans and their land. Then as now, there was an original "ideological" conflict; Protestants in the East were fighting Catholics in the Southwest. Then, as we hope not now, the issue was a sort of compromise in the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648.

Since then the home of Western civilization has been torn asunder by two catastrophic fighters—Frederick the Great and Napoleon; but neither of them moved Europe so profoundly as it is moved at the present time. In the case of Frederick it was another step—perhaps the most critical in the consolidation and aggrandizement of Prussia. In the case of Napoleon, one had an adventurer of amazing genius taking advantage of the upset of the old order in France to impose himself and his family both at home and in the neighboring Western countries. Millions of lives were sacrificed in the outbreak but a good many abuses were cleared away in the process. It was a mad and aggressive act but far less dangerous, less immoral and less brutal than the German assault which now threatens the world.

A hundred years have passed in which the resources of civilization and the power of science have immeasurably increased. Within that time many fresh nations settled down as they hoped to peaceful progress within the home of Western civilization. The vast majority abhorred war and thought it unnecessary. A League of Nations and a multitude of societies and agencies and preachers were active to prevent it. The optimists foresaw a time—before the end of the century—when under the leadership of the Five Republics of France, Great Britain, Germany, Italy and Spain the other countries would live happily together and give an enlightened leadership to the world. It might have been. Actually, we are struggling in a conflict more widespread and ruinous than either of those in the centuries before.

We are called upon to fight to the utmost and to the end to prevent a great and unimaginable disaster falling upon our planet. This is an obvious and admitted civic duty of all except the small minority of fanatics who can prove that they have held the doctrine that no one should fight in any case. But for the great majority who in this war are heartily convinced, it is also helpful to have as full and truthful an account as possible of the circumstances and of the cause in which they are engaged. This is quite available in the present war, but is not realized as clearly as it should be, for two reasons. One is the monstrous and almost incredible character of many of the facts; the other the circumstance that the war has become mixed up with what to many of its supporters seems to be little less than a social revolution. One reads many writings and hears many speeches in which the grim facts and justification of the war play but a small part of the exposition. We are for the most part engaged in looking forward to the glorious time which is to follow when all our social evils will be healed and the world will be the paradise of our dreams. We hope and believe that this may be so; but it will require long, skilful and persistent effort and above all the removal of the threatening peril which now faces us in more than one region of the world. We had not anticipated it and hence the threat is the more dangerous. We now realize that, just as the greater part of mankind was settling down in peace and carefully cherishing their sense of unity, there were two or three strongly organized nations which rejected the ideal and were determined to play for their own hands. Chief of these of course was Germany, and on the other side of the globe, less observed by us, was Japan. Nearer home and less decided in her actions was Italy or rather the ambitious man who had succeeded in establishing an armed force in that country. To all of these, the "redistribution of the world by force" became a gospel, and it was to be a gospel realized by the negation of all the canons of moral and civilized behavior which had been built up between either individuals or nations. "Life is robbery" is one of the many, entirely unmoral and brutal sayings with which the speeches and writings of the Nazi- or rather pan-German crowd are full. They make no secret of their thoughts. The fact is that the stuff was so barbarous and inhuman that we did not believe it and went on treating them as civilized human beings. Then came the revelation. Stroke after stroke was dealt, lie after lie was uttered and with such skill and preparedness that nearly all Europe was in chains before we had built our munition factories.

The monstrous cruelty and foul slaughter, especially of Jews, Poles, and Czechoslovaks, are now the byword of all mankind; they arouse not only the amazement but the furious resentment of all right-thinking men and women. There should be resentment and there should be punishment; but how is it to be administered?

There is one vestige of truth and justice in their claim for a "redistribution of the world." Undoubtedly at least Great Britain and France have nominal "empires" in size far beyond what their own populations would warrant. But there has never been a law, human or divine, assigning equal portions of the earth's surface to equal numbers of men. The size of nations and the allocation of colonial territories are due to a hundred causes; are in fact a summary of the history of civilization. They could not be resettled even by a triumphant gang in Germany and Japan though rivers of blood may be shed and slavery imposed here and there for a time in the attempt to do it. This is the valley of the shadow of death through which we are toiling. But we shall emerge one day—wiser, if not sadder, men.

"That every man may receive at least a moderate education, and thereby be enabled to read the histories of his own and other countries by which he may duly appreciate the value of our free institutions, appears to be an object of vital importance. . . ."

Abraham Lincoln—1832.

Humanism and Religion

F. H. AMPHLETT MICKLEWRIGHT

A modern scientific culture has, as its outcome, the determination of social morality and individual endeavor upon objective grounds. It is humanistic in that its first concern is with man and with those things which may be felt, touched, and handled. Any theological deductions which may be made by the individual Humanist, such as a belief in a theistic explanation of causation, arise from speculations which have their origin in the nature of man himself and are based upon an objective empirical observation. In this sense, a modern Humanism of the type of Lippmann or Stoddard is the logical outcome of the great humanistic movement of the sixteenth century. The Renaissance, led by Erasmus or Colet, was more than a return to classical literature; it was a realization that man stands at the centre of his universe. First principles in morality or culture must be sought within human thought rather than in the abstract postulate of the existence of God. Descartes achieved a philosophical revolution in his complete breach with a past typified by Aquinas and Scholasticism.

The roots of Humanism lie in philosophy; its ultimate effects must bear fruit in the field of religion. A theology represents a series of definitions and deductions rationalizing and expounding fundamental religious experience. Christendom had inherited a general theological stereotype; it was summed up in the historic creeds. The sixteenth century Renaissance represented the first great point of departure; such work as that of Casaubon insisted that a pagan classical culture existed which lay outside any of the credal definitions. The philosophical revolution led to a stress upon belief in man as the core of an approach to the problems of the universe. Rationalism was a natural development from this position; the school of Locke and Hume strengthened the appeal to human experience as the key to an understanding of being. Whatever modifications have since occurred did not lead to a bridging of the gulf between Scholasticism, with its first premises rooted in an affirmation of Divine action, and the homocentric approach which had its modern origins in the sixteenth century. The issue has been complicated further; the scientific renaissance has led to a development from idealism to realism. The Hegelianism which marked the ultimate stage of the literary renaissance is rapidly giving way to realist philosophies; there is, as Professor Sidney Hook has emphasized, a road from Hegel to Marx opened out by the use of the scientific method in philosophy.

From an historical viewpoint, the traditional theories of religion have been in retreat for three centuries. Culturally, a dogmatic Protestantism never did command the field; it was tempered and affected by Humanism. Both in England and America, Protestant church life has always been accompanied, in its more intellectual wing, by Platonism, Unitarianism, or other rationalizing philosophical movements. The Cambridge Platonists and John Locke did much to hinder the spread of Calvinistic opinions in England. A Deity who is approached through a stress upon human cogitation or activity is essentially a deduction set within a humanistic attitude. The strongest blows made against traditional religion came first from the Copernican astronomy and the literary Humanists. A traditional creed about God was exchanged for a living faith in man as the scene of the Divine action.

The intervening three centuries have seen various developments. A rationalistic Biblical study had its origins during the eighteenth century. Its outcome has been to interpret the Bible in the light of its natural place in ancient literature. The superstitious bibliolatry of popular Protestantism has collapsed everywhere save in intellectual backwoods. Miracle, or belief in specific supernatural intervention in the course of human affairs, was attacked by Hume; the gradualist theory of revelation propounded by Lessing was likewise a philosophical onslaught. But the strongest attacks came from the side of historical criticism, a science which developed during the nineteenth century. Each record of a supposed miracle was subjected to close scrutiny; it cannot be said that any account of miracle passed the test in such a manner as to remove grounds for grave uncertainty. Finally, the renaissance of physical science, associated with such names as Darwin and T. H. Huxley, shattered the old theological conception of the universe. Its outcome has been the scientific method, an insistence that every sphere of human activity, including that of religion, shall be brought beneath the tests prescribed by comparison and experiment.

The contribution of the twentieth century has been made very largely in terms of psychology and sociology. The human mind is now opened out to science; man is examined in his social relationships and his behavior is studied in the light of his economic circumstances. The Victorian rationalist strove to maintain the old conceptions in the realm of morality; the changing circumstances have dictated a very different approach. The lesson of the last three centuries has been that of a retreat from absolute to relative concepts; ideals, aspirations, cultures have become understood in their human environment. Beauty, for example, is of importance in relationship to existing conceptions or things. As an ideal abstraction, it is meaningless for it is unrelated to any material process. So, too, with goodness; there is no ideal good, such as classical religion would claim, which can be known or understood. A thing is good or bad in terms of the circumstances and context within which activity takes place. A final truth only has meaning in terms of those things which are true. Just as the nineteenth century explored the full implications of the conception of evolution, it may be the task of the twentieth century to explore that of relativity. Many of the deductions once associated with evolution have dropped away; an inevitable and beneficent progress within human history has proved a delusion, whilst the "inevitability of gradualness" needs far closer definition than it received from Mr. Sidney Webb and the early Fabians. Darwinianism, whether in biology or society, has been forced to consider the implications of revolution in a fresh light, just as the revolutionary has been led to understand that an upheaval does not mean invariably that "the world's great age begins anew." It may be the beginning of a long and hard road leading to social rebuilding. Yet, evolutionary conceptions of

morality and history have come to stay; they need to be explained in terms of the relativity of moral conduct or aesthetic appreciation.

The result of these latter-day developments of Humanism has been to leave traditional religion shattered and maimed. It is useless to attempt a series of repatchings after the manner of some theological modernists. Religion in itself implies an experience which may be extrarational; it insists upon the acceptance of some "myth," in the Platonic sense, which embraces and sums up contemporary hopes and aspirations. Whether or not this "myth" be defined in terms of theism depends upon the philosophical standpoint adopted. Certainly, many Humanists will be theists and many others will remain agnostic upon this point. But, in any case, stress must be laid upon the elements of necessary agnosticism which enter into any modern religious approach. An Infinite and Unknown must be ultimately unknowable by the finite mind in the last resort. The task of a religious Humanism is to supply this sense of orientation in an age when the old values or theologies have broken down. The alternative is the blank secularity which expresses itself in terms of the morality implied by the radio, the press, the small car, or on the other hand by the sanctified amiability which has replaced the categorical imperative as the content of most church teaching.

The resuscitation of religion in the world of today is of outstanding importance. Upon it rests the stabilization of contemporary instinct, endeavor, and aspiration. In the sense in which religion has been defined, it affords the background for the evolution of a modern culture capable of transcending the various fragmentary quasi-religions whose votaries are now engaged in tearing asunder the times. But this end will not be achieved by the mere admission that Jesus did not have a virgin mother or that the creeds are out-of-date. These things are patches upon a threadbare garment; they have long been accepted, sometimes incoherently, as truisms in the greater world outside the churches. The lessons of three centuries of development must be learned and applied. They have been centuries of pilgrimage from heaven to earth; their full implication was understood by T. S. Eliot when, appalled by his own conclusions in *The Waste Land*, he fled into Anglo-Catholicism and took refuge in the gentle light mediated through a stained-glass window.

A Humanism which has absorbed its heritage must rebuild upon three premises. It must stress the universality of human culture and insist that the world of human activity lies beyond the confines of any credal definition. It must express its approach to history in terms of evolution and point out that man's highest moral victories still lie probably in the far distant future. It must allow a rightful place to the conception of relativity, and urge the relative nature of human morality. In the light of these realizations, it will be capable of expressing a myth for the times in terms of contemporary need and understanding.

The vital task before Humanism is to render certain philosophical and religious conceptions of man's high calling explicit within the realm of human effort. Traditional religion has collapsed because it possesses no such relevancy; it is integrated to an educational and clinical background which human understanding has long surpassed. For example, no sociologist would consider discussing crime and punishment in terms of some absolute abstraction of sin and redemption; it is a matter for objective scientific treatment in the light of psychological research. Man has been left groping by the collapse of classic religious assertions; the old gods have departed and no generally agreed alternatives have yet taken their place. The last three centuries indicate the victory of human reason and experience over theological explanations of man's nature and destiny. Humanism is a philosophy inasmuch as it seeks to accept and rationalize this process; it becomes a religion when it attempts to provide mankind with a coherent cultural background from which a myth of the times may arise. Its immediate objective cannot be the repatching of the older creeds. The three centuries since Descartes have seen their gradual defeat in every quarter. A humanistic faith must be an assertion of the high destiny of man and the formulation of a religious approach to the universe dictated by evolution and relativism.

Vista of Peace

Peace is a pattern planted like a seed
In every man, with tendrils climbing into light,
And roots that reach into the subsoil of his night;
Pattern defined, though chaos thrust its rooted weed.
Peace is all patterned, though it has no creed;
It was man's cry through ages' plunging plight,
His white desire in fear or pride; in thickest fight
It reoccurred unheard in song, mysteriously keyed . . .
Evolution is the upward stepping *time* of life,
But deep and far, beyond this outer shadow pageantry,
Beyond the backward and the forward stress and strife,
Is *Peace*—the eternal, changeless ancestry:
From this beginning shall time bury arms and knife,
From this grows man's triumphant destiny!

How far the aeons stretch with war and blood!
How grim the sightless eyes, the shattered limbs,
The haunted, trouble-weighted interims.
How lost all starry rays in hopeless mud. . .
Yet strength creeps up like lively springtime bud,
And rugged revelations crown despair,
While vistas, glimpsing clear the goal foursquare,
Arise with hope and struggle from time's flood. . .
Man, by his own Will, shall lay the plan,
He shall make laws, with understanding build—
Frustration yet shall have her warlike span,
But this same *time* shall see all prophecy fulfilled:
So, it was destined before the world began—
All Hail! The bright-starred Brotherhood of Man!

ROSE NOLLER.

The Study Table

KARL M. C. CHWOROWSKY

Lasting Inspiration

CITIZEN TOM PAINE. *By Howard Fast. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce. 341 pp. $2.75.*

These are the times that try men's souls. The summer soldier and sunshine patriot will, in this crisis, shrink from the service of their country; but he that stands it now, deserves the love and thanks of man and woman. Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered.

It was in the winter of 1776, with the Continental army under General Washington in retreat and things looking very bad indeed for the American Revolution, that Washington said to Thomas Paine, "If you can, write something, not only for the army but for the whole country. We're so near the end." And we are told, "with the drum held between his knees, with the top tilted to catch the wavering light of the fire, he scratched and scratched away, all the night through. The men gathered around him. . . They read as he wrote," and what he wrote began with those famous words quoted above and became the first of those immortal pamphlets which, because they had been inspired and dictated by the greatest crisis these young "independent United States" had known, were to go down in history as *The Crisis.*

At that time, Paine was already well known to a wide circle of readers among the colonies as the author of *Common Sense,* and as the years went on he was to play a significant part in keeping courage alive and devotion to freedom and independence fiercely burning in the hearts of his fellow-patriots until victory came and with it the firm establishment upon these shores of the greatest republic of all times. Of the first *Crisis,* the editor of the *Pennsylvania Journal,* who had purchased the pamphlet from Paine, had said, "It's fire. I've seen a lot of writing, but nothing that was hot as this." And how right he was, for *The Crisis* was indeed a fire, only one of many that Paine, the arch-revolutionary, the uncompromising enemy of tyranny and despotism, was to kindle. Here was a flame that was to burn even more fiercely in later years through the pages of *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason.*

In writing his biographical novel about Thomas Paine, Howard Fast has produced a fine and strong book. He has studied closely the records of history and given his readers a clear picture of the background that produced Paine, the son of a poor Quaker staymaker in Thetford, England, as well as of the events of those stirring years from which the character of Thomas Paine, writer, patriot, and lover of freedom, emerges in clear outline and with undeniable human appeal. The book is written with a sure touch, with a fine instinct for historic truth, and always with that frank deference to the paradoxical elements in the personality of its hero which make the subject of this volume so extremely lovable and at the same time so provocative and irritating. Whether Fast pictures Paine as the patriot, as the "Revolutionary at large," as the apostle of freedom and of world brotherhood, or as the disillusioned old man, the embittered deputy from Calais to the French National Convention, and finally as the indignant American citizen deprived of his franchise and dying in New York, scorned and denounced as atheist and infidel by his own fellow-citizens and by the world at large, to be buried on his farm in New Rochelle only to have his bones dug up and again buried, no one knows where—always the author is convincing in making his hero real and walking among his contemporaries as the giant and prophet that he was.

There is something peculiarly timely in the appearance of this book at this time. It is good for us living in "Times that try men's souls" to meet face to face with one who not only helped state and interpret the liberties and rights we now possess and defend but whose person comes alive in these pages as a warning voice for all who think that the priceless possessions of liberty can be either cheaply won or easily maintained.

Thomas Paine not only fought for freedom against its enemies from without, he also knew what it meant to preserve the spirit and the institutions of liberty against the disintegrating forces of treachery and corruption from within. In his love of freedom, his fierce devotion to free expression and untrammeled opinion, in his utter love for mankind and his boldly imaginative conception of a world republic and a universal Brotherhood of Man, he remains for all times a prophetic figure whose voice and example cannot die and whose personal sacrifices for cause and conviction are a lasting inspiration to all who love Freedom both in her rich rewards as well as in her stern exactions. That the author of *The Rights of Man* and *The Age of Reason,* a great Humanist and a professed theist, should have died almost forgotten by his own generation, misunderstood and maligned as fanatic and unbeliever by the politicians and theologians of his day, is just another pathetic evidence not only of the proverbial ingratitude of republics but also of that strange perversity of men who are as quick to acclaim as they are to spurn and to forget.

There seems to be only one major fault about this book, and that is its unnecessary emphasis upon certain unpleasant and distasteful habits allegedly a part of the character of Thomas Paine. It would seem that most reliable biographers of Paine would rather agree with this estimate of his personal appearance and habits as recently made in a letter to the *New York Times Book Review* by Janet Deitrick: "Instinctively a gentleman, personable, with fine eyes, self-educated like Franklin, the intimate of many great men, despiser of both blasphemy and profanity, Paine lived temperately and fastidiously until close to sixty when grief and bitterness began to break him." It does seem to this reviewer that Mr. Fast might have said less of the "dirtiness," the tippling habits, and the general untidiness of his hero, although it must be admitted that these uglier features of the general picture do not materially detract from the heroic portrait here presented.

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Rhythm of Emotion and Conviction

AMERICAN REASONS. *By Bonaro W. Overstreet. New York: The Macmillan Co. 45 pp. $1.00.*

These six poems, done in a bold and free style that forsakes the traditional patterns of rhyme and metre for the more brittle rhythm of tense emotion and the powerful metre of hot conviction, interpret to the

reader the response of six typical Americans to the challenge of the present war. Originally written for the radio program, "The Voice of Freedom," sponsored by Freedom House, and later appearing in Sunday editions of *PM*, these pieces present a Soldier, a Young Soldier's Wife, a Business Executive, a Woman Working in Her Kitchen, a Negro Soldier, and a Writer in straightforward confessions of what this war means to them and in simple statements of the "reasons" for their willing participation in the sacrifices and hardships of these strenuous days.

Mrs. Overstreet has well caught the spirit of our America at war, a spirit still struggling "to make a conviction stand clear in words" but also rising steadily from confusion and uncertainty to clear understanding and proud conviction that express themselves in words like these:

> In a world where nothing is perfect, I'll call *good*
> A land where the common man can work for change,

or

> And there's something else we have that's a mighty thing
> When life's imperfect: our American declaration
> About the nature and basic rights of man.

or

> One of the things I'm fighting for, myself,
> Is a chance to go on learning what words can do
> On the tongues of our speaking race.

The reader readily identifies himself with the young Soldier who tells a stranger "the reason I talked of peace . . . and signed for war." There are beautiful lines that sink deep into memory in the story of the Young Soldier's Wife who uses these words in describing the American dream: "The American dream is a dream with home at the end."

There is profound pathos in these lines from "A Business Executive Said," where the son leaving for service says:

> I'm beginning to know . . . if I can't have my life to live
> As I've wanted to, I'd like to believe it was spent
> Making a world that was not a strong man's world. . .
> But a people's world. . .

And the father's final reflection:

> I'm having to find for myself
> Something to make it make sense to go on living
> Wondering from day to day if he's still alive.

The Woman at Work in Her Kitchen now wishes "we'd taken a chance on the League" and confesses she has

> come to see the world
> Isn't made up of little separate pieces,

and she reflects on

> the difference
> Between peace-*makers*—those whom our Lord called blessed—
> And peace-*wishers*—who want to be let alone
> To think of themselves,

and she concludes,

> We've got to fight (
> For another chance to tie the world together
> In ways that are generous and right.

One of the strongest of these poems is the fifth, "A Negro Soldier Said," where a young Negro, in the uniform of a free land that even in days of war refuses to honor his uniform as it honors that of his white comrade-in-arms, quotes his mother as saying to him one day when he was "mad clear through at something that had happened." She said:

> You're a wanter—but make your wants so big
> They cover everybody—not so little
> They cover just yourself.

These poems are full of wisdom and sound patriotism. Their wisdom is mature and salty and strong; their love of country wholesome and tender and brave. *American Reasons* is a book of poems *of* these times and *for* these times.

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Religious—"In Another Sort of Way"

THE STORY OF DR. WASSELL. *By James Hilton. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 158 pp. $1.50.*

In his radio broadcast to the nation on April 28, 1942, President Roosevelt paid special tribute to Dr. Corydon Wassell, American Navy doctor, who, while on duty in Java caring for the wounded officers and men of the cruisers *Houston* and *Marblehead*, had decided to evacuate his charges from an inland hospital and after many hardships and strange adventures succeeded in bringing twelve men to a base hospital in Fremantle, Australia. The President quoted from the official report of Doctor Wassell's conduct the words, "he was almost like a Christ-like shepherd devoted to his flock."

In this slim volume, the author of *Goodbye, Mr. Chips* and other popular novels tells the story of this Navy doctor from Arkansas, who under the most trying conditions and in the face of continual danger from the enemy not only accomplished his difficult mission but throughout his perilous experience conducted himself with exemplary devotion to duty, with remarkable fortitude, with supreme intelligence, and with a simple human freshness and sense of humor that challenged the admiration and affection of all that came into contact with him.

Doctor Wassell had been ordered to Cavite in September, 1941, and was to have sailed from San Francisco on the morning of December 7. The momentous events of that morning changed both his plans and destiny, and early February, 1942, finds him at a Dutch inland hospital on Java, assuming charge of forty-one wounded sailors from the heavily battered cruisers *Houston* and *Marblehead* that had been in action off the Java coast on February 4. News of the approach of the enemy hastens his decision to evacuate his charges, but the stretcher cases are refused transport by the officer in charge, and it is only after repeated attempts and disappointments that he is able to get them on the inter-island Dutch passenger steamer, the *M. S. Janssens*. But the real adventure has now only begun. Japanese Zeros bomb and machine-gun the little ship whose cabins and holes are crowded with frightened passengers. A number of the more hysterical refugees finally decide to take their chance on landing at an island port, and those remaining aboard, including Doctor Wassell and his twelve men, reach the safety of an Australian harbor after ten harrowing days filled with imminent threat from submarines, enemy ships, and bombers. During this time, the grimly determined doctor had watched over his wounded boys like a mother; he was never too tired to listen to their complaints or to minister to their wants, and every page of this simple narrative speaks eloquently of this man's magnificent courage and devotion, writing an-

other brilliant record of heroism among the many being produced by these stirring days.

Again the deft pen of James Hilton excels in sketching character, in describing scenes and locale, and in mingling drama and delightful humor. Among the charges of Doctor Wassell, the reader will remember especially the ship's cook McGuffey, who had made up his mind not to like the new doctor and who at first gives him plenty of trouble; there is Sun, the Chinese mess boy, who smiles for the first time when the decision is made to stay aboard the *Janssens* and to see it through; there is Wilson, the officer, whose fierce wounds fail to dampen either his courage or his lightheartedness; and Renny, too ill to talk but made happy by having smuggled on board his little Javanese nurse, whom they have nicknamed "Three Martini."

The character of Doctor Wassell is nowhere shown to finer advantage than in his surprise when told by the U. S. Admiral in Fremantle that he had been awarded the Navy Cross for gallantry and devotion to duty, or in that revealing incident when aboard the *Janssens* he discusses with the Dutch padre religion and prayer. At Wassell's suggestion, the two had kneeled to pray, and after rising, the padre comments quizzically, "I didn't know you were a religious man, Doctor." Wassell answers, "Well, I'm not, in a sort of way, but then I am, too, in another sort of way." To which the padre responds, touching the doctor's arm gently, "Perhaps the other sort of way is better."

This story is bound to touch its readers deeply and to stir them profoundly by its revelation of that greatness which simple and faithful men may achieve when confronted by duty and when prompted by their own resources of nobility and heroism.

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Organized Religion and Political Secularism

RELIGION IN SOVIET RUSSIA. *By N. S. Timasheff. New York: Sheed & Ward. 171 pp. $2.00.*

The purpose of this book, as stated in the Foreword by the author, is "to give some notion of the assault on religion which has taken place in Russia during the last twenty-five years, of the magnificent resistance of the believers, and of the situation brought about by repeated onslaughts and repulses." The author, an Assistant Professor of Sociology at Fordham University, New York, has utilized data published in Soviet newspapers and journals, observations made by competent foreign visitors to Russia, his own personal observations during the years 1917-1921 which he spent in Petrograd, and private communications which he claims to have received from reliable sources.

The historical background, so necessary for any understanding of the religious situation in Russia, the author furnishes in the first chapter, "The Inevitable Conflict," where he discusses the rise of Greek Orthodox Christianity in Russia, the growth of the State Church with all its weaknesses and strength (?), the advent of communistic doctrines into Russia as early as the seventies of the past century, and the inevitable warfare that had to result from the clash of these forces once Communism was able to implement its ideology with political and economic power.

The author meets the common accusation of Communism that the church had become a corrupt and willing tool of a despotic Czarism and "prostituted to the autocratic government" with the claim that the church, instead of being at the time of the 1917 revolution "a nuisance, an obstacle to progress, a corpse to be buried," had become well set on a course of serious and far-reaching reform under the Provisional government. He is certain that before the rise to power of the Bolsheviks "there was religious life behind the petrified external structure; there was faith in the flock; there was devotion and readiness for sacrifice." His reasons for the popular support given to communistic leadership by the people of Russia, despite their deep-seated religious sentiments, will not satisfy every reader, and it is quite obvious that only too often in the course of his discussion the scholar defers to the loyal son of Holy Church; but it can hardly be denied that he makes a good case for the general proposition that religion has not died in Russia, and that despite the debacle of the Living Church movement, as he presents it, religion will not only survive but will have to be reckoned with by the leaders of the Communist Party.

Of "The New Religious Policy," he has this to say by way of summation: "Religion is tolerated, but it is not permitted to function according to its rights; not only is no one allowed to propagate religion, that is to convert pagans, but no one is even permitted to refute openly the insults of atheism."

Allowing for the obvious weaknesses of the book, which are less factual than interpretative, this volume is a well-authenticated and scholarly study of the conflict between organized religion and political secularism in Russia; the outcome of this struggle the author presumes to predict in the form of a lovely old Russian legend, with which he closes the book, that of the Grad Kitezh which poetically voices the hope that "Holy Russia" will again rise from her baptism of blood as she has done so often before. Many readers will share this hope, but again they are also likely to differ sharply with the interpretation of this hope by the author.

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German Protestant Saint

I WAS IN HELL WITH NIEMOELLER. *By Leo Stein. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co. 253 pp. $2.50.*

This is a book about a brave man by another brave man. The author, at one time a lecturer in law at German universities, here reports in vivid personal style, his experiences of meeting that great German Protestant Saint, rebel, and mouthpiece of anti-Hitler sentiment, Martin Niemoeller in the Berlin prison, Moabit, and later in the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen.

A Jewish intellectual and teacher, Doctor Stein was bound sooner or later to arouse the suspicions of the Gestapo; he was arrested and for months held prisoner, to be finally released and allowed to leave for America with his wife. Niemoeller's parting words to Doctor Stein were, "When you are free, tell the world what you have seen and heard." This is Doctor Stein's fulfillment of that commission.

We get here what is probably the most reliable and most intimate picture we have so far had of this remarkable man, Niemoeller: one-time U-boat commander, minister of a fashionable church in the Berlin suburb, Dahlem, one of the early followers of Nazism and Hitler, and later as severe a critic of that movement and its leader as he had once been their enthusiastic supporter. Because he refused to say "Heil Hitler to God," as he once put it, Niemoeller was incar-

cerated; that was before the war broke out and, as far as we know, he is still a prisoner in some concentration camp, if not dead by this time—another illustrious victim to Hitler's terror and fear.

In Moabit as well as in Sachsenhausen, the author had opportunity to observe his famous fellow prisoner, to talk with him, and to obtain from him those priceless observations and comments on subjects such as Hitler, Nazism, anti-Semitism, religion, and the church, which form the substance of these chapters. From this hell of torture, brutality, loneliness, and indignity, the figure of Niemoeller emerges, as from a purifying fire, noble, utterly humane, truly religious, and humbly wise. His effect upon his fellow prisoners is often short of electrifying, and these pages of tribute to his genius as leader and to his greatness as martyr are eloquent testimony to the character of a man whom all these years of suffering have not been able to break.

Speaking of Niemoeller's power over the hearts of men, Doctor Stein says towards the end of the book, "I do not know how to describe it, but such is the power of example. And I hope that when the hour of reckoning comes many will be remembered for Martin Niemoeller's sake."

This book has a mission for the days ahead; it will be the many hundreds of thousands of Niemoellers in Germany whom the victors will have to organize and encourage in the terrific task of re-educating the post-war generation and the building of the New Germany.

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A Fascinating Personality

DAVID. *By Duff Cooper. New York: Harper & Bros. 292 pp. $3.00.*

Towards the close of his story about David, Duff Cooper sums up the character of his hero whose brilliant career as soldier, poet, lover, artist, statesman, and king he re-creates so effectively throughout the pages of this book, with these words:

> The psalms are the only key to his heart. They reveal a proud and lonely nature, relying rather upon God than upon his fellow men for comfort and companionship; one easily moved, sometimes cast down into the depths of gloom, coming near to despair, and at other times exalted by triumph to heights of ecstasy—the mercurial temperament of genius, seldom calm or happy.

Among the great men of history, David occupies a prominent and arresting position. It was due to his genius as soldier, organizer, and statesman that the Hebrew Kingdom, founded by Samuel and Saul, was established and given a place of prominence among the kingdoms of the East. To know David means to know a peculiarly significant period of Hebrew history, to understand better that particular culture and society which in Palestine laid the foundations for those immortal contributions to the civilization of mankind associated with the words Hebraism and Judaism.

The author has succeeded very well in bringing to life one of the most fascinating personalities of ancient history: David the shepherd lad, the dreamer and lover of poetry and music, the bold fighter and clever strategist, the ardent lover and devoted friend, the firm ruler and wise statesman, and also David the man of moods, high-spirited and volatile, easily influenced by woman, not above lapses into passionate hatred and ugly vindictiveness, and yet always a David ready to recognize the error of his ways and to return in penitence to his God. In these pages he walks and talks as a vital personality whose common humanity as well as supreme genius the centuries have not been able either to destroy or to diminish.

It is good to have a man of the high literary calibre of a Duff Cooper employ his talents in reinterpreting to our generation a Biblical character that has so often been obscured by theological speculation and distorted by sentimental effusiveness. The author steers wisely between a romantic exaltation of his hero and a dry-as-dust academic description of this great figure of the past. David emerges in the first place as a human being, as a child of his day and creature of his times, but also as the genius he was, a man of unusual gifts of heart and mind. In the light that Duff Cooper's sensitive interpretation sheds upon the life and character of David we cannot but discover new vantage-points from which to judge and evaluate the associates of the son of Jesse and the period of Hebrew history to which he contributed so much. We understand better the figure of Samuel and that of Saul; the personalities of Michal, Joab, Abner, Bathsheba, Absalom, and Solomon come to life; and the closing years of the great king, so fraught with significance for Israel's future, ring with ominous meaning and portentous prophecy as we read.

It was a generous impulse that prompted the author to dedicate this lyrical re-creation of a great Hebrew leader to the Jewish people, to whom, as he says in his dedication, "the world owes the Old and the New Testaments and much else in the realms of beauty and knowledge, a debt that has been ill repaid." This book helps repay this debt, and both Jewish and non-Jewish readers will be grateful. And not merely by way of an afterthought, this book should make a strong appeal to boys of junior high school age as collateral reading in Old Testament history.

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Short Stories

CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM. *By Sholem Asch. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 433 pp. $2.50.*

To most readers the name of Sholem Asch is associated with the longer novel, more specifically with such masterpieces of fiction as *The Nazarene, Salvation, Three Cities, The Mother,* and others. This volume gathers together, in the able translation by Maurice Samuels, the short stories of Sholem Asch, every one of which is just another proof of this writer's uncanny ability at telling a story and creating characters and situations that vibrate with life and beauty.

These miniatures of Jewish life in its colorful variety of scene and experience may serve a very practical as well as esthetic purpose these days in presenting, particularly to the non-Jewish reader, an introduction to the soul of a people that to this day remains "a stranger in our midst." No present-day author writes with more sympathy and understanding, with more affection and concern, about Jews, their everyday life, their ancient hopes, and their undying faith than does Sholem Asch; and here you have him at his best.

Whether it be the pathetic story of "The Boy Saint," the touching tale of "The Mother's Reward," the moving narrative of the young wife who hates to surrender her hair to the custom of shearing at her wedding in "The Rebel," or such memorable tales as "Young Years" and "His Second Love," there is not one of these twenty-nine stories but stirs the heart with its

utter simplicity, its quaint and yet so human characters, its infinite pathos and ever-present tragedy, its imperishable hope and triumphant faith. I wish that these stories might not only be read *by* many but also be read *to* many; they are excellently suited for interpretative readings.

Correspondence

Our Correspondents Differ

To UNITY:

Mr. Victor S. Yarros' letter in the July issue of UNITY brings sad memories of the Thirty Years' War, when the opponents played at cross purposes with the resulting death toll which took two out of every three Germans, and one wonders if in our era peace lovers and war makers are to follow Germany's example today—in this respect as we have already done in so many ways.

The undersigned are most decidedly with your correspondent in his estimate of the "uncivilized" and "immoral" character, the barbarism and "psychopathic malignity" of those worshippers of brute force with whom (of necessity) any peace-by-consultation would have to be arranged; but we wish to call to his attention, and to readers who share his views, the all too obvious fact that we Americans are tarred with the same stick. Lest his letter—which implies that the ruthless, uncivilized, inhuman Axis partners are pitted against decent, civilized, and humane nationals in this immoral struggle — go unanswered, we ask permission to submit a few items which point directly to the opposite state of affairs.

First, as to psychopathic malignity,—and this is a question to Mr. Yarros: What about the ruthless treatment of Mexicans in Los Angeles (camouflaged a bit by calling them "Zoot-suiters"), and the far worse Detroit race riots with a rehabilitated K.K.K. in the background? Second, as to the inhumanity, we quote from the *Christian Century* of April 14 citing an A.P. dispatch of March 6 after the sea battle north of New Guinea, "when the Allied airman dropped his bombs on three lifeboats containing about 100 Japanese soldiers, after which he messaged his base, 'no survivors.'"

News Week (March 15) had this version:

> The battle ended with a virtual massacre . . . squadrons of Allied planes ruthlessly strafed them [Japanese survivors] as they drifted . . . Told that some hundreds of Japs had been spotted in boats a general merely said: "Send a formation of Beaufighters to kill some more." . . . And MacArthur's communique ended thus: "There was scarcely a survivor so far as was known."

This same paper (March 22) contains a reference to Ennis Whitehead, to whom General MacArthur has given the Distinguished Service Cross—whose ruthlessness gained for him in the Far East the characterization of "The Murderer of Moresby," which, comments the editor of *News Week*, "he takes with a grin." This, after Allied bombers had killed hundreds of Japanese troops at Buna!

The *Christian Century* editorial from which we quote above was headed, "Are We Shooting Helpless Men?" We invite Mr. Yarros to ponder this question.

BLANCHE WATSON,
FLORENCE HOGE.

Clayton, Georgia.

Reply

To UNITY:

The question which Misses Watson and Hoge ask me to ponder is not a very difficult one. We—that is, the American people and their government—are *not* shooting helpless men. We do not *believe* in shooting helpless men. No, *not even in retaliation.* The Japanese authorities and leaders do shoot helpless men. They torture prisoners; they have tortured American press correspondents. They have encouraged their soldiers to loot, to rape women, to massacre civilians. The Hitler brutes have shot and hanged innocent men and women, and the Nazi philosophy justifies and exalts such behavior. The insane slaughter of Jews by Hitler's savages is nowhere accidental. It is systematic and deliberate.

Assuming that the instances of American cruelty and inhumanity cited by Misses Watson and Hoge have actually occurred, it is perfectly clear that they are exceptional, ascribable, no doubt, to extreme indignation caused by the atrocities and crimes of the barbarous enemy. No reasonable person can indict our government, or our military leaders as a group, on the basis of a few deplorable cases. Our record all through the war is creditable and worthy of high commendation.

As for the race riots, what decent American is not ashamed of them and determined to prevent similar outbreaks in the future? Who has ever denied that we still have serious social and political problems; that we have not lived up to our principles, that we have sins of omission and commission to answer for in the court of reason and justice? We have the Negro problem, as we have the anti-Semitic problem, the Mexican problem. But the point is, we are *aware* of our shortcomings, and we are, as a people, determined to move forward and upward, to fulfill the high, noble promises which, as the poet told us, are another name for America. Among our millions, to be sure, there are fools, demagogues, blatherskites, venomous and irresponsible peddlers of poison and infamous lies. But these evil forces do not represent America. The great majority repudiate them and believe in sanity, decency, and fair play. And our government has worked and fought for these virtues. Hitler declares that *his* mission is to undermine and kill the Ten Commandments. His quack philosophers have made war on science, on ethics, on freedom, on everything we associate with civilization. It is simply *not intelligent* to imply that we are not much better than the Nazis and the Fascists.

My second question in the letter to the pacifists and Quakers is totally ignored by Misses Watson and Hoge. Let me repeat it. What terms of peace are they and their friends prepared to propose to, or accept from Hitler, Tojo, and Mussolini's successor in Italy? To favor peace by consultation and negotiation is to have in mind some program deemed preferable to war. Why not give us that outline to ponder? Failure to do so is confession of bankruptcy. Unconditional surrender is the only possible demand that decent and humane people capable of clear thinking have to make of the brutes, sadists, and apemen whom we are forced to smash and destroy.

VICTOR S. YARROS.

La Jolla, California.

Congratulations!

To UNITY:

I congratulate you on your July issue; it is a fine number. "American Purpose" by Curtis W. Reese is a clarion call to the American people; every word rings true and strong.

The letter of Victor S. Yarros, in the Correspondence Section, is full of sound sense, showing a complete comprehension of the present world situation.

Valuable is the emphasis that is put by John Haynes Holmes in his Editorial on the declaration of the Supreme Court that under the Bill of Rights public school children could not be compelled to salute the American flag, if this ceremony conflicted with their religious beliefs.

BETSY B. DAVIS.

Pearl River, New York.

Correction

To UNITY:

A friend points out an error in my second editorial paragraph in the last issue of UNITY (page 83). In speaking of the late leader of the Free Religious Movement in London, I referred to him as William Walsh instead of WALTER WALSH.

I hasten to correct this error—a careless slip of memory! Dr. Walter Walsh was a great and good man who taught me much, and I would have his name accurately survive.

JOHN HAYNES HOLMES.

New York City.